

Water in out - door as transitional space in architecture

The Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Architecture

University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

For the Final Examination in M.Sc (Architecture) and

RIBA Part II Examination

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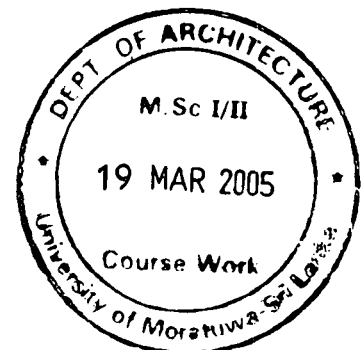
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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of individuals have been instrumental in the final product of this dissertation. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each and every one for their help and guidance extended to me, during the study.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Archt. Vidura Sri Nammuni, Head of the Department of Architecture, University of Moratuwa. I am also deeply indebted to Dr Upendra Rajapaksha, who coordinates the dissertation and Archt. Prasanna Kulathilaka; for their incisive advice and invaluable comments and encouragement throughout the whole process of completing the product.




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I am deeply indebted and my heartfelt gratitude to Archt. Varuna De Silva, lecture of the Department of Architecture, who gave me right guidance throughout this endeavor. Also I express my honour and gratitude to Dr. Harsha Munasinghe and Dr. Samitha Manawadu for their valuable time and advices on complete this dissertation. Then my special thanks go for the 6th year masters; Archt. Jayanath Silva, Archt. Garmini Weerasinghe, and Archt. Aroscha, for their invaluable comments and support during the period by giving relevant particulars.

I am also very grateful to Shabee, who helped me by making comments on the study to make it attentive. And finally I would like to thank my parents, Thilina, Sundara Uncle, Sujith uncle, and other family members and friends for their support in numerous ways; and encouragement provided to make this study success.

CONTENTS

	Page
Declaration	i
Acknowledgments	ii
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	x
 INTRODUCTION:	 xi
Observation	xii
Topic Explanation	xii
Intention of the study	xiii
Methodology	xiv
Scope and limitations	xv
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. Electronic Theses & Dissertations www.lib.mrt.ac.lk</p> </div>	
CHAPTER ONE: Space as a Factor of Generating Experience and Behaviour	1
1.1 Concept / notion of space in architecture	2
1.1.1 Space	2
1.1.2 Attributes of space	3
1.1.3 Architecture as a spatial domain	4
1.2 Human attributes related to space	5
1.2.1 Perception	5
1.2.2 Existentialism	6
1.2.3 Spatial behavior	6
1.3 Arrangement of spaces and condition the spatial experiences	7
1.3.1 Formation of spaces	7
1.3.2 Conditioning the spatial experiences	8
1.4 Experience of spatial relations in architecture	9
1.5 Concluding remarks	10

CHAPTER TWO: Transitional Space as a Conditioning Space of Behaviour	11
2.1 Transitional space and its impact upon user	12
2.1.1 Transformation with in transitional space	13
2.1.2 Physical and psychological role	14
2.2 Generation of character of transitional space	15
2.2.1 Organic order	15
2.2.2 Structure of patterns	15
2.2.3 Patterns of transitional space	16
2.3 Types of transitional space	17
2.3.1 Spatial transitional space	17
2.3.2 Visual transitional space	18
2.4 Transitional behaviour in relation to the language of architecture	19
2.4.1 Arousal of behaviour	20
2.4.2 Regulation of behaviour	20
2.4.1 Sustenance of behaviour	20
2.5 Out-door as a transitional factor in architecture	21
2.5.1 Formation of out door transitional spaces	22
2.6 Concluding remarks	23
CHAPTER THREE: Use of Water as Transitional Factor in Architecture	25
3.1 Spatiality of water	26
3.1.1 Water as material of out-door formation	27
3.2 Water as an influencing factor of transition	28
3.2.1 Motivational attributes of water in out door spaces	28
3.2.2 Spatial and visual importance of water in out-door	29
3.3 Water in out-door as transitional medium	29
3.3.1 Water in static form	29

3.3.2 Water in dynamic form	30
3.3.3 Water as generating factor of 'rasa'	32
3.3.4 Symbolizing water with other means	32
3.4 Relationship between water in out-door and the built environment (architecture)	34
3.4.1 Conditioning the behavior and the mind-set of user	34
3.4.2 Enhancing spatial experiences	35
3.5 Transitional behavior and satisfaction of transitional need by water in out-door space	35
3.5.1 Water as factor of arousal of behaviour - Portland plaza-San Francisco	35
3.5.2 Water as factor of regulation of behaviour - Ryoanji temple - Kyoto	36
3.5.3 Water as factor of sustenance of behaviour-Re.of P.Jayawardane Sri Lanka	37
3.6 Concluding remarks	38
CHAPTER FOUR: Creating Transition through Water in Out Door Spaces	39
4.1 Transition as an influencing factor for achieve the ultimate goal of architectural space	40
4.2 Basis of selection of case studies	40
4.3 Case studies	41
4.3.1 Case study1: Sigiriya pleasure garden as a leisure oriented public space	
4.3.1.1 Introduction	42
4.3.1.2 Transitional attributes of spaces and its impact on user	43
4.3.2 Case study 2: Blue waters as a recreational oriented public space	
4.3.2.1 Introduction	49
4.3.2.2 Transitional attributes of spaces and its impact on user	49
4.3.3 Case study 3: Parliament Complex as a public space for selected group	
4.3.3.1 Introduction	54
4.3.3.2 Transitional attributes of spaces and its impact on user	55
4.4 Analytical conclusions on case studies	59
CONCLUSION	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	64

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Chapter One	
1. Space is never complete and finite	2
2. Space reflects human behaviour	3
3. Finite architectural space	4
4. Space as experienced in serial vision and become existential	4
5. Human attributes related to the space	5
6. Experiencing of 'in' and 'out' space from one plane	6
7. Behavioral responses are depending on physical settings	7
8. Different overhead definitions of space	7
9. Properly demarcated space, using nature and built elements	8
10. Built mass has demarcated, without disturbing the context	8
11. Building can be perceived as a reference point	8
12. Building as an object in nature	9
13. Entrance as a 'out-space' and compound as a 'in-space'	9
14. The room as 'in-space' and views as 'out-space'	9
Chapter Two	
15. Transitional spaces are the conditioning spaces for human behaviour	12
16. Sudden transformation at the entrance	13
17. Steps which blend with nature creates gradual transformation	13
18. Physical settings of space generates various impact on human mind	14
19. People try to find place for preparation before go to the building directly	16
20. Spatial transitional space as possession in movement	17
21. Set of visual transitions	18
22. Visual transitions as a vista or restricted views	18
23. Glimpse of space, generate comfortable feelings and behavior on user	19

24. Out-door would arouse behavioral change in human mind	20
25. Regulation of behaviour, due to calm panoramic view	20
26. Out-door is the enhancing factor of architectural experiences	21
27. Nature is fully disturbed and thereby uncomfortable for human survival	21
28. Out-door can be utilized as 'transitional space' for better human habitation	22
29. Very limited out-door also can create positive transition	22
30. Individual building blended in with its site	22
31. Individual building contrasted against its site	22
32. Conscious out-door formation generates transitions and thereby Influences architectural experiences	23

Chapter Three

33. Qualitative aspects of water depend on the out-door formation	26
34. water arise qualitative aspects of out-door; by enhancing transitional emotions	26
35. Dynamism of water depends on the out-door formation	27
36. Static water generates contemplative impact on human mind	27
37. Spatial transitional space as a possession of movement	28
38. Spatial transition designed as a static resting	28
39. Water is a motivational factor in out-door formation	28
40. Still water reflects whole world beyond	29
41. Nature of pools	30
42. Dynamism of water	30
43. Behaviour of flowing water with respect to channel condition	31
44. Various falling attributes of water	31
45. Expression of a vast expansion of water through racked gravel	32
46. Water creates moods of contemplation	32
47. Water creates dramatic joyfulness	33
48. Disgracefulness in water	33
49. Water enhances the rhythmic relationship of spaces	35

50. Portland plaza, exciting experience of water	36
51. Love-joy plaza, gives dynamism of water	36
52. Residence-Calm but yet alive quality	37

Chapter Four

53. Out-door would conditions the behaviour according to the achievable goal of the building	40
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Case Study One

54. Sigiriya – Palace in the sky	42
55. Layout plan of the Sigiriya	42
56. Sigiriya wave sustenance behavior for static pause	43
57. Linier approach creates gradual transition by arousing positive movement	43
58. Calm water body creates moods of contemplation	43
59. View of the pleasure garden from the rock	44
60. Dynamic experience of water arouse dramatic behavioral impact on user	44
61. Water staircases in Sigiriya	45
62. Fountain jets increase the dynamism of place	45
63. Formal octagonal shape of water and irregular shape of the rock boulder	46
64. Flight of steps creates gradual transitional movement	46
65. Visual transitions as a vista through massive rocks	46
66. Infinite nature reduces the tension and tiredness	46
67. Narrow rocks restricted behaviour for necessary activities	46
68. Sudden transition arouse gasp emotional and behavioral change	47
69. Water in out-door brings overall enthusiasm	47

Case study Two

70. Blue waters is the place where sky can speak with the blue ocean	49
71. Layout of Blue Waters	49
72. Entrance creates sudden transitional in human mind	50
73. Vista of the sea at far end	50

74. Corridors as 'build room' formed a vista of out-door space beyond	50
75. Physically and psychologically comfortable transitional impact	51
76. Dynamism of water transit mind to be active and live	51
77. Tranquility and calmness of the water pool	51
78. Horizon becomes boundary, to finite the space	52
79. Dining space harmonized 'in-space' with 'out-space'	52
80. Water-with-water	52
81. Deep pleasure and relaxation will deviate mind from temporal world	53

Case Study Three

82. Ceremonial and monumental quality of the parliament	54
83. Stands above the water	55
84. Gradual behavioral movement aroused, due to water and surrounding environment	55
85. Layout plan of the complex	55
86. Water enhances the transitional attributes of out-door	56
87. Out-door influences the transition further	56
88. In-door keeps visual relation with out-door as enhancing factor of transition	57
89. Enclosure demarcates the higher purpose of the building	58

ABSTRACT

Marcel Brener says *"space is never complete and finite. It is in motion, connected to the next space, and to the next space...and to the finite space."* (Quoted in Siminds, O.J – 1983) Along this flow of spaces, the 'transitional space' becomes more important, because it is an intermediate space which has capabilities of condition the human mind for subsequent environment. The transitional need in human mind will be governed by the expressive qualities of the spaces and their relationships.

Normally designers try to upgrade the building quality by using different forms, colors, materials, textures, etc. and make architectural work more attentive. But this would create an artificial and uncomfortable impact on user, for adjusting the new experience immediately. Such sudden change of experience would lead for generate inappropriate behavioral pattern in human. Therefore the transitional (in-between) spaces can be introduced between spaces to harmonize the contrast in the context and; to enhance the quality of architectural experience. *"The transition must, in effect, destroy the momentum of the closed-ness, tension and distance..."* (Alexandra C, 1977)

As a natural phenomenon, human ingenuity firstly depends on the natural pressure and later by the artificial means. Therefore eventual instincts of human being tend to be with the nature due to its flexibility and appropriateness on conditioning human mind for the changing contexts. Especially, properly designed out-door would promote physical and psychological comfort on user, in order to become a conditioning space of behaviors as the ultimate purpose of the building. Therefore the out-door space cannot be considered as a just left out space by the building; it should be utilized as a conditioning space of human spatial experience. Water as one of mans' inherent motivational factor of giving inspirations and emotions, can be utilized as a design element of out-door formation. Water in out-door would become a successive conditioning factor for generate proper human motivation and it enhances the spatial relations in more meaningful manner.

This dissertation would discuss transitional need among the spaces, and how the water in out-door could be used as a conditioning factor for humanized the spatial experiences in satisfactory manner.



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Introduction

Water in Out-Door as Transitional Space in Architect

INTRODUCTION:

Observation

"Did man not always search for god in nature?" (Schultz N, 1971) There is an inherent need exists in man to form an emotional relationship with his environment and thereby become part of it. He formed an intuitive relationship, which brought him into the eternal order of nature and try to arrange the elements around him to fulfill his needs.

Trees and their shades, water waves and their wetter breezes, ponds and their reflections would provide peacefulness, seclusion, quietness as well as other motivational attributes, which would enhances the character of space with the architectural quality. And this remains a constant contentment in man.

Topic Explanation



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Mans' experience of space in relation to a building would be different from one to another. If there is a change in spatial experiences, man's actions and reactions would be vary, prior to adopting that new condition. And it will depend upon the level of appreciation in perceiver and his ability to receive what it is expressed. Mostly, the designers giving attention to create and upgrade the spatial quality by using different forms, interior spaces, usage of materials, colors etc. and make architectural experience more efficient. But this could generate sudden behavioral changers stressfully, by creating difficult condition on perceiver, for adjusting the new experiences.

To avoid such condition; the spatial environment could be humanized and it should have ability to convey the message that was intended, by evoking emotions in perceiver. Therefore an in-between space or a transitional space would be required as a 'conditioning zone' of behavior. In the case of human behaviour, the transition space would play a significant role. Sudden change of experience from one condition to another will cause physical and psychological separation, resulting in stressful and inappropriate behavioral pattern in man. Therefore the transitional space can introduced as a in between space; to avoid such behavioral arguments and thereby leads for stimulate the spatial experiences.

However, due to the lack attention given on transitional spaces, the coherence of the built fabric is fading away and it generates socially unacceptable architecture. As human nature we like to experience natural environment and it gives great strength to conditioning the mind-set for changing context. So while the spatial experience change accordance to the building; the out-door spaces in and around the building could be utilized, in such a way to act as a 'conditioning space'. So the well designed outdoor spaces with usage of water would become a successive transitional method, which guides and helps to achieve the ultimate goal of the building in order to become an 'in-between breathing' space. Water is the only element besides birds and human beings, which brings life and movement in to the spaces; to condition the feelings and behaviour of people.

Intention of the Study

Spatial experiences and spatial behaviors are always conditioned by the way of space has been formed and the way it is conceived. Thus in relation to the architectural experiences, properly designed transitional spaces would simulate satisfactory behavioral response in human, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of the building. So the transitional spaces would play great role to make architectural experiences more efficient and successful.

Therefore the presence of transitional space would minimize the physical and psychological separation which could occur due to the stressful formation of spaces. So it is a necessity to understand the importance of arranging surrounded un-built fabric in meaningful manner to act as a 'conditioning space'. Because of the emotions of a person is always conditioned by the way in formation of spaces. It leads for proper spatial experience by satisfying certain objectives of the building. Properly designed outdoor always become a strengthen factor of architectural experiences therefore it can not be considered as just a left out space, should be utilized as a part of architectural experience. Unfortunately, transitional spaces are diminishing rapidly while creating socially unacceptable placeless-spaces. The study will basically discussed on water in out-door as a transitional factor in architectural experience.



Methodology

Basically the discussion builds on four areas. Firstly space and spatial relations, secondly transitional space and its impact on user, thirdly water as transitional medium and finally creating transition through water in out-door. Perception or the existentiality of an architectural space always based on humans' psychological process. Place provides identity, comfort and sense of belonging to the user and becomes personalized place which can physically occupied (in-space) and psychologically perceived (out-space). With regards to the particular build mass, the experience of outer spaces would be a great assist to sequence the spatial experiences by enhancing its transitional value. Especially usage of water in out door would enhance the physical and spiritual comfort on user and thereby become a conditioning space for human behaviour. If the arrangements of outdoor-to-indoor relations become a sequence of spatial experiences; it will assist to achieve the ultimate goal or the purpose of particular building. After identifying the achievable objective of the building, 'water and out-door' can be arranged as a method of providing transition; as the required purpose of the building.

The first half of this dissertation will stipulate deeper understanding on transitional spaces and achieving such need successfully by water in outdoor. For that, the dissertation would firstly follow the quality of the space as a factor of generating spatial behavior and experience on human. Then this will discuss the role of transitional spaces between two extremes. After that this argument would emphasize transitional attributes in water and how it could enhances the architectural quality by leading to generate gradual spatial experiences.

The second half of the dissertation will comprise the careful examination on properly designed build masses which have particular goals to fulfill. Further more; it describes how those spaces transit human emotions and behaviors according to the particular condition by creating comfortable transition, which is capable of enhancing the architectural value and social acceptability. Basically the argument will base on transitional behaviour, while carrying out photographic survey and selected case studies.

Scope and Limitations

Transitional spaces lead to generate proper environmental ambience which could able to satisfy the human mind, without creating stressful condition on them. So 'the transitional spaces' would generate successive transitional behaviors, and takes him for gradual journey through the spaces. Three selected examples have taken from public category to give the idea of the importance in properly designed water in out-door as transitional factor. As public buildings, they have definite goal to fulfill; so the respective incorporation of transitional spaces would be a great assist to achieve the ultimate objective of the building. Therefore the basic scope of this study is to build-up an overall understanding on transitional need between spaces; and the way of that transitions help to fulfill the ultimate objectives of the particular building. The selected case studies are,

- **Sigiriya** pleasure garden as a leisure oriented public space
- **Blue waters** as a recreational oriented public space
- **Parliament** Complex as a public space for selected group

Those three public spaces have used to give the idea of satisfying the ultimate objective, by using water in out-door as a transitional factor. The knowledge gained from the chapter two and three have taken as the frame to discuss above case studies. Discussion have focused to study, how the water in out-door could lead to generate successful transitional behaviors on perceiver; by providing sudden or gradual transitions between spaces. Further more it builds up an overall understanding how the perceiver could able to change his emotions and behaviors; according to the changing context of water (static, dynamic, etc.) in out-door.